A WALLED GARDEN

MARGARET ROOT GARVIN

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A WALLED GARDEN AND OTHER POEMS

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A WALLED GARDEN
AND OTHER POEMS BY
MARGARET ROOT GARVIN

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TO MY MOTHER

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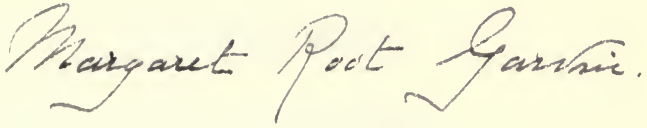
A WALLED GARDEN AND OTHER POEMS



A WALLED GARDEN

HAVE a fair walled garden,
The winds are shut outside;
Its every aspect southern,
Though compasses deride.

No fruit of growth so foreign
But in its soil finds room;
And never lift mine eyes in vain
To find some bough abloom.

The flowers gleam like beacons
For butterflies that throng;
Nor doth it lack for nightingales
To jewel it with song.

And where the friendly shade trees
Clasp hands to arch a shrine,
Are carven all the names I love —
A radiant roll they shine!

The leaves disdain to wither,
And, when a breeze goes by,
They flutter into laughter
Whose echo is a sigh.

At eve, when tent of twilight
Shuts out the spying sun,
I almost hear them whispering
The Thousand Tales and One!

Yet (by a strange enchantment
Their eyes were holden so!)
Some who within my garden walked
Saw only books arow!

THE NIGHT-WATCH

WITH woven grass, and spreading tree,
For coverlid, and canopy,
Dears, I have laid you all to sleep!
And by the bed (as mothers do,)
I hush my heart for love of you —
'T would mar your dreams to hear me weep!

Ye are my children, though one be
That dearest Heart that mothered me;
One, he who called *her* "Child;" and one
Who to my soul's first vision stood
For image of God's Fatherhood,
Till the love-parable was done.

But I am aged with grief and pain,
And ye are Heaven-young again —
Are children, over whom I bend,
That even in sleep you may not miss
Love's measure by a single kiss,
Or lie without one heart to tend.

And if my life must, for your sake,
Be one long night-watch till you wake,
(How lone with all your voices gone!)
I rest my heart (as mothers do)
To think how sweet is sleep to you,
And gild the night with dreams of dawn.

THE HERALD HEART

OLD England half familiar seems,
Nor strange it should be so;
For though my feet first tread it now,
Yet years and years ago,

When hindering Time and Space seemed leagued
To keep me from its shore,
My heart I took, like that of Bruce,
And cast it on before!

THE BITTER THING

'TIS hard, my Heart, for toiling through,
This Land-of-Lonely-Things!
No league were long, could she be nigh,
To share thy wanderings;
Yet would'st thou have her here — footsore —
Who hath the wont of wings?

So long thy shelter was her love
'T is bleak and sore to be
The buffet of unkindly winds,
Yet, though they beat on thee,
Give thanks, my Heart, that she is cloaked
From all inclemency!

But when through fairer valley-ways
Sometimes thy paths deploy;
Some rainbow comes to span the storm,
Some sweet, too rare to cloy,
Then weep, Heart, for this bitter thing: —
Unshared with her, thy Joy!

A SIGNET

MY heart is cut intaglio;
A signet ruby, warm of tint;
Cut even wasteful deep, that so
A clearer image it imprint.

My heart is cut intaglio,
And so whatever may be pressed
Thereon, with fervent love, shall show
In proud relief that image blest!

Like seals, where men of long ago
Carved god, or queen with diadem,
The image made the jewel glow,
And where it rested left a gem.

THE LIFE-MASK

JUDGED by the years' false reckoning, thou
wert old;
'T was Life that lied, and Death revealed
the truth:
The spirit slipped its mask of flesh — behold
The smiling and immortal face of Youth!

THE NARCISSUS-POOL

DOTH the fickle Mirror trace
Lines unlovely on thy face?
Scorn it as Time's servile tool!
And, for thy Narcissus-pool,
Look in loving eyes, for there
Thou shalt find thyself still fair.

IF YOU SHOULD JOURNEY BACK FROM DEATH

IF you should journey back from death,
And suddenly should greet my gaze,
I would not waste one blissful breath
In any hesitant amaze.

My arms would have you in their hold
Without one question or reply;
My very eyelids would infold
The sight of you, lest it should fly!

My lips, without a word, could well
Confess how lonely they had been;
And I would let the joy-tears tell
Of grief that kept them locked within.

The pressure of my hands would plead
With yours to never let them go;
My feet would follow in your lead
Without a wish the way to know.

If you to love should reappear
It would not seem the mystery
Our parting was, nor each strange year
Wherein you have been lost to me.

MEMORIAL DAY

ON their swords the red rust,
On their graves the red roses:
Like old Hate, turned to dust,
On their swords the red rust,
While Love blooms, as it must;
So this day-dawn discloses
On their swords, the red rust,
On their graves, the red roses.

TO EACH HIS OWN

EACH hath his drug for Sorrow
(Or else the pain would slay!)
For one, it is "To-morrow;"
For one, 't is "Yesterday."

"And hast thou lost, my Brother?"
"Yea, but in dreams I find."
"And I" (so saith another)
"Leave buried dead behind!"

For each, when gyves are fretting,
A different balm must be:
Some find it in forgetting,
And some in memory.

FEBRUARY'S JEWEL

ONCE on a time, in Northern lands,
A Violet so longed to vary
The slow routine of Spring's commands,
It bloomed too soon, in February;
Alas, it found by fatal test,
That for her children Spring knew best!

Oh, ne'er had February Frost
For visitor so fair a flower!
And, stopping not to count the cost
Now that he had it in his power,
With chilly kisses froze it hard,
And yet its beauty never marred.

But when the flower waif was found,
No one could know its story cruel;
They fettered it with gold around,
And called it February's Jewel.
Poor flower, losing e'en its name,
For Amethyst it now became!

Since then have others shared its fate;
Small wonder though, to see one shining
Transfigured, in such foreign state,
The truth we have been slow divining:
It is, though called an Amethyst,
A Violet the Frost hath kissed.

RICH AND POOR

I WAS rich when I was born
I 'll be rich again when I die;
So there still is cheer in this famine-year,
So long in the passing by!

So long in the passing by —
So foreign-faced, and lone:
Where not one I meet, in the door or street,
Is ever one of my own!

I was born to the wealth of a home,
To the heart-hoards Love doth spend;
I shall yet lay hold on that buried gold,
At the tear-tint rainbow's end!

I am miser of memories now
(The gold with a grief alloy,)
But some Heaven-day shall my want repay
With the spendthrift hand of Joy!

IN DEAR DISGUISE

WHEN Sorrow hastened to my door,
Where many griefs had gone before,
It entered where my heart lay prone,
Too deep despairing to make moan;
When lo, a loving voice, apart,
Was saying: — "Dear, how brave thou art!"
For very pride, for very shame —
A craven, called by hero's name —
From my faint heart some valor came!

"The way is lonely and is long,"
I hear Love say, "but thou art strong!"
Then, as some weakling might be made
True knight, by touch of accolade,
I rise, with strength that is not mine,
To merit Love's belief divine:
We are not brave, nor strong, nor wise,
Save as beheld by Love's blind eyes,
Yet play the rôle, in dear disguise!

THE RUNE OF THE RINGS

WHEN Death hews the heart, like a tree,
Cleaving it through the core,
Shall be read the rings of its growth,
Which never were read before.

Look at the lovely lines
Where the young tree swayed to the south;
Or the starveling growth, and frail,
In a famine-year of drouth.

Here is an arrow's point,
Patiently over-grown
But the careless archer's name
None but the Tree hath known.

There it was warped by the wind;
Here, it shot up in the sun;
It hath suckled a wild-wood stream,
For look, how the ripples run!

Yet even the rune of its rings
Not all of the tale hath told:
Of the buds of hope that it bore
To bury beneath the mould.

Though the sweet sap rise no more,
  And though it be gnarled within,
Ah, well for the Heart at last
  That 's free from the rot of sin!

THE HERMIT THRUSH

A HERMIT? Nay!
Did hermit e'er discover
A minstrel, and a lover,
Of liquid lay?

'T is true, thy mood
Shrinks from the city's staining,
And hath a high disdaining
Of plaudits rude.

They love the noon,
Thy brothers of the branches;
No fright of darkness stanches
Thy twilight-tune.

So potent thou,
The forests hush to hear thee,
The very Moon nests near thee
On yonder bough.

Life's heart-breaks all,
Speak in thy song's deep sadness;
Yet ghosts of bygone gladness
Come at thy call.

Snared in a word—
Thou art, to souls discerning,
In voice, in flight, in yearning,
Love, born a bird!

THY WORK OF LOVE

THOU knowest I am not yet wise
To comprehend thy Paradise,
So when, in sleep, again I flee
To our old Love-land, there with me
Thou comest to wander, 'neath glad skies.

Thou speakest in no unknown tongue
Which, mocking, in mine ears had rung,
To boast achievement of new bliss,
But with the prelude of a kiss,
Some song I loved by thee is sung.

I may not yet my thirst appease
At thy full cup that hath no lees,
So thou, in tender pity for
My parched and pleading lips dost pour
Rare cordial of remembrances.

I pray we all things yet shall share,
As ever here, for ever there;
But now — God bless the dear emprise! —
Thou, garbed in old beloved guise,
Dost from our Past my Heaven prepare.

THE LITTLE GUEST-ROOM IN MY HEART

THE little guest-room in my heart
I fitted for thy tenancy,
And though thy presence stays apart
It is not wholly bare of thee:

For all the dreams there take thy shape;
And from each humble thing it holds
Some fragrant thoughts of thee escape,
Like lavender from linen folds,

No picture hangs upon the walls
That any other eye could trace,
But ever where the sunlight falls
I see the glory of thy face.

No other tenant may it take—
Nay, rather loneliness for choice!
I would not have another wake
The echo's dreaming of thy voice.

ASLEEP, THEY DREAM

THE Sundial sleeps, on a cloudy day,
Its following finger rigid and still;
For what is noon, with the Sun away,
But kin to the midnight chill?
Yet asleep it dreams of its Liege above,
And learns that grief is the shadow of Love!

On a windless day is the Vane asleep,
With its finger turned toward the highway wide
Whence the Zephyr hastened, a tryst to keep,
Who travelled far for its kiss — and died!
Yet, in sleep, it dreams what the Zephyr saith,
And knows that its word was of love, not death.

The Compass sleeps, in the sunken ships,
For numb to the North has its finger grown;
Where the waters close in a great eclipse,
And the shattered ships make moan;
Yet asleep it dreams of the Beacon Star,
That no waves can quench, and no wrecks can mar!

Oh, strange is the day without thee for Sun!
And sad is the night that thy Star forsakes!
Now the south-sweet breath of thy lips is done,
No dearest summons my Heart awakes:
Yet, in sleep, it dreams of the Past and thee —
Of Sun, of Star, and of Wind set free!

APRIL

APRIL is a Moslem maiden,
Veiling, with a cloud,
Smiles with which her lips are laden,
From the eager crowd.

Though the maid, in loth surrender,
Half her charms would hoard,
Glances from her eyes, tear-tender,
Seem a rich award!

A DWELLING DEAR

I KNOW thy grief, thy fear,
O lonely little House! O Dwelling dear!
Thou yearnest them of yore,
Behind the barrier of thy brave-barred door!

Even I, who love thee best, thou fearest me —
Lest I should turn the key!
But on thy poverty I will not spy
Who shared thy wealth gone by.

So warm thou wert of old,
I will not come to find thy chimneys cold;
But dream the sunset-rays
Upon thy window-pane, a hearth-fire blaze.

'T were hard for thee, to see me hungered there,
When all thy board stood bare;
Nor shall my knocking force thee to confess
Thine echo's hollowness!

Dear House, I do thy will:
And make no entrance, but believe thee still
Peopled with dearest kin —
For if I enter not, they are within!

A FEATHERED HARLEQUIN

THE Mocking-bird, a feathered Harlequin,
With fun a-flutter, jeers us to our faces!
On nearest bough his comedies begin,
His very notes like musical grimaces.

And then, while yet our laughter he compels,
Is heard the rhapsody of Nightingale:
Oh, wonder of the art he learned, that tells
Unto his Love, in her own speech, love's tale!

But hark — a cry, harsh with despair, comes after!
In pitying pause of silence we divine,
(O Harlequin, for tears forgive our laughter!)
The Jester's heart a-break for Columbine!

MOON FLOWERS

FLOWERS of the Moon, are dreams:
Sudden they spring from the dark soil of night;
In shadows foliate, their buds are bright;
With bloom, more fair than fruit, their leafage teems,
Flowers of the Moon.

Like night-moths, Psyche-winged,
Our souls do sip these flower-fonts of Joy;
Until the flames of Dawn the wings destroy,
And tendrils break, that round our hearts were ringed —
Flowers of the Moon!

A PEARL IN WINE

ONE jewel only did my Soul give thine:
This Pearl of love, white growth within my heart;
And Life, the goldsmith, on it spent his art,
That for thy dear adorning it might shine.
Yet half its lustre, (as I now divine)
Was mirrored from thy love — sweet the thought's smart!
How rich was I, when of thy wealth 't was part;
How poor I am, now it again is mine!

No more thy bosom may its setting be;
And to none other shall the gem belong,
By any purchase, or by any plea!
To make the treasure thine eternally,
Do I dissolve it in the wine of Song,
And pour the love-libation out to thee!

THE WEB

A WEB have I in weaving,
And, as the shuttles fly,
In cunning craft, in loyal truth,
Penelope am I!

Each morn, at waking, ravelled,
Re-woven every night;
And if it be the "stuff of dreams,"
The gossamer is bright.

The urgent Days would woo me
Away from Memory,
But not until my web is done,
Shall have their will of me!

The fleece for it was gathered
From fields of the dear Past;
And lo, my heart has dyed it deep
With Tyrian-tints that last!

The pattern? Ah, it varies
With threads the fingers find:—
With grief and love, for warp and woof,
What dare not be designed?

Yet oft I weave in wonder,
For oh, what other loom
Could bring a far-off face to smile?
A bygone rose to bloom?

And with its folds about me,
No sorrow-shaft comes through:
As spider's silver-linkèd mail
Turns arrow-points of dew.

It veils from me the visions
A waking eye beholds;
Alone the scimitar of Dawn
Can cleave the filmy folds.

Without my Web's love-labor,
How empty were these hands!
Until my travellers return,
I 'll weave the ravelled strands.

TO A POET'S PEN

IT was thy very self, with which he wrought
Fair traceries of thought;
That left upon the page a lovelier line
Than any brush or chisel could design,
Or lapidist make shine.

Thy gold a symbol of his song did seem,
For without dross, his dream!
Ah, who companioned him as close as thou?
Surer than speech, his message to avow,
True talisman! Though now

Thou art forever orphaned of his hand—
Idle as grief, to stand!
Though unremembering Time shall tarnish thee,
His Fame, (thy foster-child) lives, lustrously—
Let this thy solace be!

IMPRISONMENT FOR LIFE

"IMPRISONMENT for life"—there hath been passed
This sentence on my Soul! While thou art free
Belovèd, I am shut from seeking thee!
I would not face the Future so aghast
Were some known limit set upon its Vast:
From certain sum of years could always be
The sweet subtraction of a day—Ah me!
But, "prisoner for life"—how long lives last!

I know not even if thou hoverest
Outside, but nigh; Dear, is the guard so strong
Thou canst not fling a rose between the bars?
Nor reach me with the message of a song?
Through all I trust thy love—which will not rest
Till I be pardoned at the Court of Stars!

THE HOUR-GLASS

THE Year hath turned his Hour-glass,
The sands of Summer pouring;
They leap and shine, like brooks at play,
Each golden grain, a golden day;
The nestling wakens, as they pass,
To singing and to soaring!

Joy did not count them, and they go
Light as a spendthrift's earning!
We wonder why — on some chill night —
The stream runs slow, the stream runs white:
Behold the sands have changed to snow,
Again the Glass is turning!

CONCERNING SORROW

WHEN first this agony my heart laid bare,
I thought the nerves of grief were stricken numb
I cried: — "No lesser anguish, which may come,
Can make me, now, of any hurt aware!"
Oh, piteous bravado of despair —
How young I was in sorrow! Of the sum
Of pain how ignorant! True, I did plumb
The depths of Life then, and can still declare

No sorrow like that sorrow; yet its power
To other woes gives increase, not relief:
Wanting her kiss to cure them, pricks wound deep!
While daily care, her voice once sang to sleep,
Can torture — yet more dread the empty hour!
While even Joy, unshared, turns grey as grief.

THE WHITE MAN'S FOOT

O INDIAN Braves, of bows unstrung!
Who knew the lore of leaf and root,
The Plantain, paths among,
You, with poetic tongue,
Called: "White Man's Foot."

You took a different path each day —
Scorned keeping wearily to one!
Scarce bent a leaf would stay,
Your footsteps to betray,
When shone your sun.

O sturdy Plantain, you live green
And flourish, where the wood-plant dies!
O Braves of mournful mien,
Waste wigwams you have seen,
And strange homes rise!

You smoked Death's Peace-Pipe long ago;
Your very language lapses mute;
In ways you once did know,
Triumphantly doth show
"The White Man's Foot!"

A PRECIOUS STONE

I WEAR the jewel thou hast worn:
The testimony of its touch
Upon my hand, (which gropes forlorn
For thine, Belovèd!) meaneth much.

'T was radiant as Love's rainbow-rays
Upon thy finger glistening;
As red, sometimes, as hearth-fire blaze,
Or green as blithest bud of Spring!

But now 't would seem, to Sorrow's sight,
As on my hand it trembles here,
To pale, and change into the white
Immortal spirit of a Tear!

ITS WEIGHT IN JOY

OF old, whene'er a Prince was born,
And all the Nation's joy was loud,
They took his weight in gold, and threw
The lordly largess 'mid the crowd:

Could I have coined this day's delight,
To cast world-wide, it should suffice
To give each soul its dream come true,
Give every heart Joy's purchase price!

I AM HOMESICK FOR THY HOME

I AM homesick for thy home!
It alone my spirit suits;
With its warm, safe walls of loam,
And its wattled roof of roots.

What if it be windowless,
When our world is all within?
Vistas were in vain, to bless
Eyes that only seek their kin.

O Belovèd, ne'er before
Was thy dwelling closed to me!
In thy sleep, they barred the door,
And I cannot waken thee!

I am homesick for thy home —
On its sill my soul is cast!
Round me only echoes roam,
Will thy welcome sound at last?

THE QUEST

WORD was sent from the Heart to the Eyes: —
"Seek her!
Look if my Love be not anywhere,
Far, on the highway, or near as her chair;
I, in my close-walled room, am blind,
Search for her, Eyes, till thou shalt find,
Seek her!"

Word was sent to the Ears, from the Heart: —
"Listen!
Heard ye her foot-step passing by?
Delight of her laughter, sound of her sigh?
Caught ye not even the Echo's word?
Here I am deaf to what Love once heard —
Listen!"

Word was sent from the Heart to the Hands: —
"Stay her!
Shall I not know, by the pulse's leap,
Whether her fingers are thine to keep?
(Oh cherish, and cradle, and cling to them!)
Or, if by only her garment's hem,
Stay her!"

But the Eyes, to the questioning Heart, reply: —
"Darkness —
Gloom of her absence, and mist of our tears!"
And "Silence," the message returned from the Ears;
While unto the prayer of the outstretched Palms
Came never an answer, and never an alms: —
"Empty!"

Yet the Heart, in its chamber dim and still,
Waiteth:
For a sight by the vision all unseen;
For sound too faint for the ear most keen;
By the hand unhandled, the touch unknown;
The Heart — with a hope that is Love's alone —
Waiteth!

AT DUSK

WHEN the grey-winged Dusk at the window enters,
Dear to eyes long-strained towards an empty highway;
Then do dreams draw nigh, seeming, in their mist-robes,
Beauteous Masquers!

Then the Wind's low speech, or a nearing shadow,
In the kind, dim light, seems a dearer presence;
Not so soon gainsaid by the tyrant Senses,
As in the noon-time.

At this twilight hour of the Soul's clear vision,
Should a face long-lost, smiling, show at entrance,
'T were to Love no more miracle than Moon-rise,
Timing the Heart's tide!

FAME

OH dearest potency of fame,
And richest guerdon of renown —
To glamour some belovèd name,
And, to the loving, hand it down!

AN ANGEL ENTERTAINED

MY arms in welcome open wide,
(To space, the senses say)
Lest she, who may be at my side,
Should think I turned away!

My lips shape kisses — though they miss
Response — lest at the door
She stands, all starving for a kiss,
Who never lacked before!

My voice shall call her names most dear,
In old, adoring tone,
Lest it should break her heart, to hear
The sound of sobs alone!

In naught shall she discover less
Of love — my smile shall be
So tender, she will never guess
Her smile I cannot see!

TO THE POET PHILIP BOURKE MARSTON

AS sightless Nydia led men through the dark,
Her gracious, groping hand their star to be,
Thy songs, in darkness voiced, bring light to me,
As, in my sudden night of grief, I hark!

MUTED

AS when a Violinist draws his bow,
All tenderly, and slow,
Across thy limnèd lips I draw mine own —
Yet follows no love-tone!

For strings relaxed, at rest, will not respond,
Howe'er the Bow plead fond:
Dear lips, so steadfast in thy silentness,
My lips can but caress!

WHEAT AND TARE

WHATE'ER the good in me
Is mine by dear bequest,
From those saint-souled, great-hearted ones,
Those lumine-lived departed ones,
Whose blood my veins hath blessed.

Whate'er the ill in me,
Mine own hand sowed the tare!
Then, lest their harvest ruined be,
Their hundred-fold escheat by me,
How must my soul beware!

THE LONELY ROOM

"WHY goest thou into thy lonely room?"
(Ah, how could they understand!)
"For here is a fire, and circling hearts,
And the warmth of word and hand."

If I leave thee, Friends, for a lonely room,
Not a churlish thought I bear;
But I seek the spot that alone is home,
For my Dearest One is there!

She is there — though never a word be said,
And no chair is filled save mine;
And we feast together, and need no bread,
Nor crave of the cup its wine.

And I never know when the candles die,
With her star-sweet eyes in sight;
'T is only when I am safe a-dream
In her arms, she saith: — "Good-night!"

So thine, O Friends! is the lonely room,
Where are gathered all — save one!
And mine the place of the joying tryst,
From the set to the risen sun!

A CARYATID TO A TELAMON

"IT presses hard — all that I have to bear!
O Telamon, hast not a hand to spare?
Thine is a task that stretches nerve and thew;
Mine, the woe-weight of being woman, too!
O Telamon, dost thou not know, not care?

"Why doth thine head down-droop so wearily
Thou wilt not even raise thine eyes to me?
Dear Telamon, thy strength is taxed too sore!
Give me the burden that thy shoulders bore,
For I am woman, and twice strong will be!"

O FAIREST FRIENDS

O FAIREST Friends! Who stand me in love's stead,
She, in your living hearts, is yet alive:
(My starven soul upon this thought will thrive!)
I shrink from those who only know her dead;
Ye knew the happy day that she was wed!
New-garlanding old memories, and hive
In heart their sweetness; all your words outstrive
Each other in her praise, that truth be said.

But ye who are so dear, may deal a blow
To my oft-stricken heart — for oh, alas,
Ye also die! How can I let you go,
Though sweet she summons? For with you doth pass
A little more of her; this world doth grow
A little less her home — save 'neath the grass!

DREAMS

O DREAMS, ye were my fire,
When all the world was cold!
And ye shall be my Youth returned,
When I am weary-old.

For dreams have been my raiment,
And dreams have been my bread;
And dreams-come-true my Paradise
Shall be, when I am dead.

SWEET SERVITORS

NO drift could hide her so away,
(Where snow besets!)
But that the Spring found where to lay
Her violets.

Although the silence of her sleep
Had seemed so long,
The Thrush she loved failed not to keep
His tryst of song.

October, (that she loved the best
Of the Year's brood)
Plucked from the plumage of its breast
The brightest hued,

With which the flying-fingered Breeze
Enwrapped her so,
Not even in a dream she sees
The shroud of snow!

And I, who feel the restless stir,
The hunger-pain,
Of one who may not minister
To her again,

Sweet servitors, (I love to dream)
Her needs attend:
Each bird, and flower, and breeze shall seem
To be her friend!

THE TORCH INVERTED

WHEN we upheld Love's torch together,
The flaring of its gallant flame,
As brave as sunrise, mocked the darkness!
With beacon-cheer for all who came.

But in my hand it droops too heavy,
A fallen star of sombre spark;
Its lonely isle of light lamenting
The deep encroachments of the dark.

One service still the Torch shall render:
Its light held low, I 'll search Life's way,
Learn where lies Heaven from thy foot-prints,
And find and follow if I may!

AFTER IMAGE

MY young eyes dwelt on Joy for such bright
years,
(Ere they had chanced on tears!)
That even yet oftwhiles, in darkling place,
I see her shining face!

A PATHWAY OVERGROWN

LOST thy leading,
Little Path,
In the weeds' wild aftermath!
Passed by wayfarers unheeding,
Where the scythe has left no swath.

Path, long-pining!
Once, her free
Footprints paved thee goldenly:
Then, thy way was straight and shining
As the Moon-path on the sea!

All thy roaming—
'Neath the fir,
Or where meadow-blossoms were,
Or by brookside—was a homing
To her doorway, unto her!

Some hope-token
Thou dost yearn;
Yet this curtaining of fern,
Where no frailest frond is broken,
Hints her footsteps' unreturn.

Haste thy passing!
  Since thy soul,
  Seeking her, must find but dole;
Wealth of joy no more amassing —
  She is gone who was thy goal!

TO A POET

WHEN none besides was near to speak,
Thy singing spoke to me.
When sorrow seemed the loneliest,
Thy grief was company.

Thy loss was comrade to mine own,
Though years and seas apart;
I blessed thee for the brotherhood
That shared a broken heart!

No singing — nay, nor any sigh —
Hath stirred thy lips for long;
Yet I would thank thee with my tears,
Salute thee with a song!

RESIPISCENCE

I LOOK on these who in her youth were young,
The living yet among,
And cry — "Oh, why could she not also be
Alive, and left to me!"
Then, coming near, I see upon each face
Things piteous to trace:
I see the paths of pain upon each brow,
(Hers so unfurrowed now!)
I see them walking with age-fettered feet,
(Hers ever were so fleet!)
Eyes dim to joy, and lips no sweets beguile,
(While hers forever smile!)
And seeing these whom Life hath left behind,
Know Death to her was kind!

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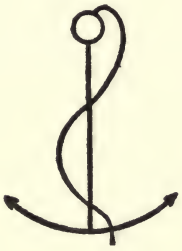

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